D-1353

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL P
C. I. D. REGISTRY
No. I.O. D.1353.
Date 15-6-30.

## PROTEST BY LABOUR.

### THE NEW WEAPON OF THE TOKYO POLICE.

The Labour leaders in Tokyo strongly resent the use of the tear-gas revolvers by the police in dispersing the Tokyo tramway employees who assembled near Hibiya for demonstration on the 26th ultimo, as already reported. On the 27th ultimo, the Central Executive Committee of the Shakai Minshuto, a Labour party, met to discuss the matter, as the result of which it was agreed that a strong protest should be entered with the Chief of the Metropolitan Police. The leaders of the Shakai Minshuto contend that the use of tear-gas revolvers against those participating in legitimate social movements is tantamount to viewing such movements in the same criminal light as burglaries and murderers, and that such behaviour on the part of the police is destined to drive social movements into dangerous channels. They have decided to demand that the policemen who abuse this weapon should be severely punished.

The Central Executive Committee of the Nihon Taishuto, another Labour party, also met on the same day, when a similar decision was reached against the use of the weapon by the police. The party was to send a delegation to the Metropolitan Police Board on the 28th to file a strong protest on the ground that the use of tear-gas revolvers against labour demonstrators threatens to usher in an age of armed conflict in industrial disputes. The leaders of the party strongly dispute the legal grounds on which the use of such revolvers was permitted by the police authorities.

We cull from the *Japan Times* the following account of the affair:—

The conflict arose as a result of a mass parade started by the tram and bus operatives including 150 women workers toward noon Monday for the purpose of pressing their demand to have their fellow workers who had been dismissed by the city authorities due to their aggressive participation in the last tram and bus strike reinstalled in their former posts. As Mayor Horikiri and Mr. Kakehi, head of the Electric Bureau, have both resigned the workers decided to carry out a manifestation so that their demand might be kept up as an open issue. Before resorting to the tactic they definitely disavowed any intention to go on another general strike.

Further, as a proper precaution prior to their demonstration the agitators' delegates laid their plan before the Chief of the Metropolitan Police, Mr. Maruyama, who told them that they had better give up the scheme. Disregarding the official's explicit warning the movement was begun by approximately 1,000 workers who gathering near Hibiya Park made for the Electric Bureau building at Marunouchi in an orderly procession at first.

Soon orderliness, however, gave way to something akin to a riot when the police strove to stem the march at the entrance of the Electric Bureau. At a sign given by a commander of the police brigade the officers whipped out the gas pistols and showered chemical shots at the crowd, bringing down dozens of men instantly. A terrific stampede followed. The fallen comrades were carried to the neighbouring hospitals in an unconscious state. As the doctors knew nothing of the new fangled weapons they were at first at a loss to ascertain the causes of the troubles of the patients. After two or three hours the patients came to themselves.

A complaint against the drastic punishment was immediately brought to Mr. Maruyama by the leaders of the mani[illegible]. "I have warned you in ad[illegible] the [illegible] not going to tell my [illegible] practice if you [illegible] demonstration of the kind disregarding my advice."

### CHIEF OF POLICE APOLOGISES.

About twenty representatives of the Shakai Minshuto, the Nihon Taishuto, the Ronoto, the Tokyo Proletarian Party, and the Tokyo Communications Labour Union visited Mr. Maruyama, Chief of the Metropolitan Police, on the 28th ultimo and filed a joint protest against the use of tear-gas revolvers by the Hibiya police against the members of the Tokyo Communications Labour Union, who made a demonstration near Hibiya Park on the 26th. In reply, Mr. Muruyama said that the action of the Hibiya police on the occasion left something to be desired, and assured the delegation that he would see that tear-gas revolvers were used as little as possible in future in connection with the control of labour movements.

The labour representatives were to visit Mr. Adachi, the Home Minister, on Thursday (29th ultimo) and lodge a similar protest about the matter.

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THE Police Bureau, it is announced, do not consider the tear-gas revolver as a weapon. Presumably, therefore, anybody may carry one without a licence and their discharge at any one is not an offence but something in the shape of a practical joke. Whether an instrument is a weapon or not depends upon the use to which it is put. It is not illegal to carry a penknife but it is certainly illegal to use it as a weapon to stab people. Many other articles of everyday use can be turned into weapons on occasion, including the *geta*, which is indeed a favourite weapon with the lower classes in Japan. But all these articles can be put to other and harmless uses. The tear-gas pistol can not, unless the laying out of an occasional burglar can be so considered. Even then it is to be feared that the burglar would decide it was a weapon and a very nasty one. To try to make out that the pistol is not a weapon would therefore seem to open the way to wholesale sale without a licence and indiscriminate use by footpads in quiet places. It is a weapon and nothing else, even if its use does not involve death, and should certainly be licensed.

Reg.
Please file carefully.
16:6:30

D.C. (Cr. and Sp. Branches)
Information
13.6.30

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